THE LORD OF THE RINGS
MOTION PICTURE TRILOGY
THE EXHIBITION

CHALLENGE FOR FILM-MAKERS

Create effects that would be too expensive to produce in reality and/or too dangerous for actors to undertake.

RELATED ACTIVITIES

Location, Location!
Mask Making
Scaling
Surfaces and Substances
Tens to Thousands

CHALLENGE FOR STUDENTS

BEFORE

- Find out about special effects used in the past.
- Make a timeline showing the approximate era in which each special effect was developed. Add illustrations or brief descriptions of the techniques.
- Discuss some special effects in movies today and the possible techniques used to create them. Research this topic.

TEACHING POINTS

e.g. the use of models, puppets, miniatures, painted backdrops, dummies, and mannequins in early movies (especially science fiction movies)

e.g. blue screens, computer-generated imagery (CGI), digital video editing

Your students could compare the special effects used by Peter Jackson in his earlier movies (*Brain Dead*, *Meet the Feebles*, *Bad Taste*, *The Frighteners*, *Heavenly Creatures*) with those used in *The Lord of the Rings*.

DURING

See or **read about** the special effects used in creating:

- the oak tree above Bag End (zone 2)
- the fight scene between Saruman and Gandalf (zone 4)
- the character of Gollum (zone 11)
- characters of different sizes (zone 12)
- digital armies (zone 14)
- digital monsters (the Cave Troll, the Balrog), digital doubles, and prosthetics (masks, Hobbit feet, wigs, and Elven ears) (zone 15)
- the mannequin of the dead Boromir (zone

19).

Focus questions:
- What are some special effects used in the movie?
- Why were these special effects used?
- What would be some alternatives to using the special effects?

AFTER

- Choose a special effect from the timeline and plan a scene that uses it. Include:
  - what resources you will need
  - how the effect will appear
  - how you will create the effect
  - how long it will take to complete and how much it will cost.
- If possible, carry out the plan.
- Present and assess your work.

Extension:

As a class, debate the statement "Film technology will make actors unnecessary."

Possible materials: screens, costumes, props, masks, paint, video, computer.

Possible techniques: shadow play, silhouettes, optical illusions, digital video editing.